

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Statement on Equal Pay

July 20, 2010

In America today, women make up half of the workforce and two-thirds of American families with children rely on a woman's wages as a significant portion of their families' income.

Yet, even in 2010, women make only 77 cents for every dollar that men earn. The gap is even more significant for working women of color, and it affects women across all education levels. As Vice President Biden and the Middle Class Task Force will discuss today, this is not just a question of fairness for hard-working women. Paycheck discrimination hurts families who lose out on badly needed income. And with so many families depending on women's wages, it hurts the American economy as a whole. In difficult economic times like these, we simply cannot afford this discriminatory burden.

My administration has already begun to address this problem. In my first week in office, I signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which helps women who face wage discrimination recover their lost wages, and in my State of the Union Address, I promised to crack down on violations of equal pay laws. Today the Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force will present its recommendations, which include ways to better coordinate among enforcement agencies and inform employees about their rights. These steps support women, and they also support businesses that are doing the right thing and paying their employees what they deserve.

We cannot do this work alone. So today, I thank the House for its work on this issue and encourage the Senate to pass the "Paycheck Fairness Act," a common-sense bill that will help ensure that men and women who do equal work receive the equal pay that they and their families deserve. Passing this bill is one of the Task Force's key recommendations, and I hope Congress will act swiftly so that I can sign it into law.

Categories: Statements by the President : Equal pay.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.

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